

FCRB conducts state-wide training sessions for local citizen volunteers...



State Foster Care Review Board of Directors member Dr. Mario Scalora, standing right at the Lincoln session, introduces: (l to r) State Senator Kathy Campbell, Nebraska Supreme Court Chief Justice Mike Heavican, State Senator Colby Coash, and State Senator Tony Fulton.

FCRB summer workshops were held at six sites across the State in May and June with extraordinary presenters that enlightened, encouraged and provided best practices for working with children involved with the foster care system and their families. Over 450 participants took time out of their busy schedules to join us for these all day events. The diverse audience included: community-based service providers, foster parents, DHHS staff, out-of-home reform agency staff, attorneys, therapists, judges, prosecutors, CASA volunteers, local FCRB board members, FCRB staff and many others.

Of great interest at each conference were the Out-of-Home Reform panels on which the Lead agencies providing the contracted services for children and their families and DHHS were represented. DHHS Service Area Administrators and Lead Agency Administrators were also present at many locations. Feedback from audience members personally impacted by the reform or representing the children and families they serve that are being adversely affected was welcomed.

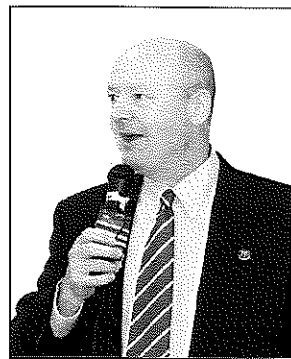
Foremost on the foster parent's list of concerns were issues with getting phone calls returned, transportation, visitation, payment for services (reduced and late payments), changes in DHHS and Service Coordinator staff, lack of

communication, poor service coordination, and a lack of clear roles. Judges, prosecutors and attorneys shared their concerns regarding many contracted service coordinators lack of case knowledge, child welfare knowledge, lack of knowledge with regard to gathering and documenting evidence to support their cases, and lack of training to prepare them for testifying in court.

Legal training included the role of the legal system in permanency planning, aggravated circumstances, the role of the GAL, grounds to terminate parental rights, and documentation and the evi-

dentary needs of the court. Depending on the location of the workshop, legal training was provided by Judge Douglas Johnson (Omaha), Judge Robert Ide (Holdrege), Judge Kent Turnbull (North Platte), Judge Donna Taylor (Madison), Judge Linda Porter (Lincoln), Judge James Worden (Scottsbluff), Attorney Christine Constantakos (Omaha), Attorney J. Leef (Sidney), County Attorney Rebecca Harling (Lincoln County), and Deputy County Attorney Robert Cashoili (Hall County).

Dr. Gregg Wright from the Center for Children and the Law (CCFL) presented at the Lincoln workshop. He explored the characteristics of drug environments that endanger children from the manufacture, use, possession, or trafficking of drugs legal and illegal. We will offer this again in the future due to the interest from across the state.



Judge Douglas Johnson



Judge Linda Porter

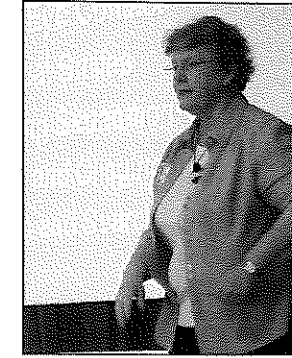
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...in partnership with the legal system, executive branch, and the legislature.

Nancy Thompson M.S., L.M.H.P. - Child and Family Therapist in Private Practice provided insight into how to serve the best interests of children and youth in foster care, how to help children in transition, and the importance of attachment and stability for a child's brain development.

Nancy had the audience laughing and crying from her heartfelt true stories one moment to furiously writing notes on how to recognize issues and help children in transition the next.

Summer workshops are an extension of the FCRB's training opportunities provided year round to expand the knowledge base of local



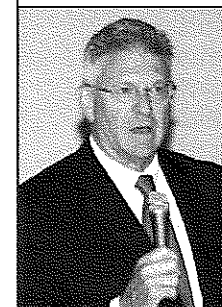
Nancy Thompson

Foster Care Review Board staff and local board members, as well as our many community partners. By providing this opportunity we improve the overall knowledge and performance of those who make decisions and provide services for children and their families. Together we can help children move to permanency without unnecessary delays.



Sen. Tom Hansen is pictured here with FCRB Executive Director Carol Stitt at the North Platte training session. Sen. Hansen was instrumental in introducing legislation to allow foster parents to share information with the courts via the Care-giver Information Form. Judges from all areas have commented on how this information assists the Courts.

Some of the persons giving greetings and comments—



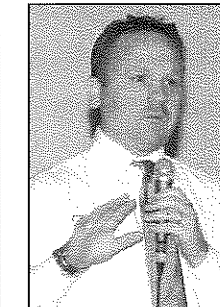
Chief Justice Mike Heavican



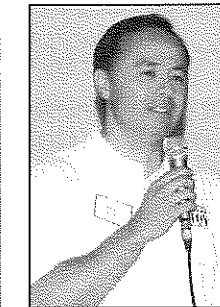
Sen. Mike Flood
Speaker of the Nebraska
Legislature



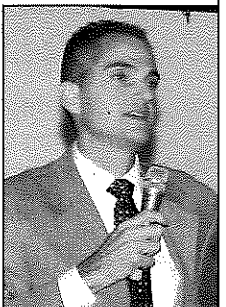
State Senator Kathy Campbell



State Senator Colby Coash



State Senator Tony Fulton



DHHS Director Todd Reckling

Some FCRB staff members who gave invaluable support:



Left to right: Abby Webben, Heidi Ore, and Karie Dey who took registrations, prepared the information packets, assured needed supplies and so much more.



Mary Furnas, who facilitated panels, compiled invitation lists, and numerous other tasks to make the workshops a success.